

IRS News Release

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IRS Urges Citizens to Seek Qualified Charities for Katrina Help

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WASHINGTON — Citizens seeking to make donations to help Hurricane Katrina victims should seek out qualified charities, the Internal Revenue Service said today.

People who have a specific charity in mind can make sure that it is a qualified charity by searching an IRS-approved list. IRS.gov has an on-line search feature that allows people to find qualified charities. Some organizations, such as churches and governments, may be qualified even though they are not listed.

The IRS does not endorse any charity. However, the Federal Emergency Management Administration has urged citizens to make cash donations to volunteer agencies with whom it is working. The U.S. government's official Web portal, FirstGov.gov, also contains disaster-relief information.

In addition, the IRS has prepared Publication 3833, Disaster Relief: Providing Assistance Through Charitable Organizations, that may be helpful for people who either want to make contributions or form a specific charity.

"We encourage citizens to make sure their contributions are put to the best use possible to help Hurricane Katrina victims," said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson. "The IRS will do everything possible to assist both taxpayers and charities in this difficult time."

The IRS also issued these following reminders to citizens and charities:

- Publication 78 lists charities with tax-exempt status, and a searchable on-line version is available through IRS.gov;
- Publication 526, Charitable Contributions, provides information on making contributions to charities;
- Taxpayers may claim a deduction for contributions to charitable organizations only if they itemize deductions on Schedule A of their Form 1040. They should retain proof of the contribution and, if the amount is more than \$250, must obtain an acknowledgement from the charity for the amount to be deductible.